

Aspects of Bunuba grammar and semantics

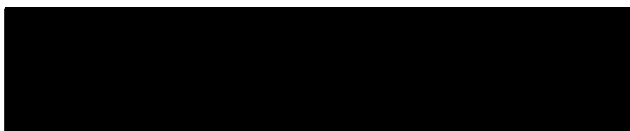
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Arts with Honours, at the
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I certify that the substance of this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree or qualification.

I certify that any help received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.



Emily Knight

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Abstract

This thesis is a study of Bunuba, a language spoken around the township of Fitzroy Crossing in the West Kimberley region of Western Australia.

Chapter 1 introduces Bunuba by discussing the location and sociolinguistic information and providing the reader with background to the language and its speakers. In this Chapter details of different speech registers and dialects are introduced and a brief review is undertaken of the previous research which has been carried out on the language and its speakers. Also included is a discussion of some contemporary uses of Bunuba and a description of my fieldwork methodology. This Chapter also sets this work apart from previous research on Bunuba, particularly that undertaken by Alan Rumsey. The differences between his work and the work presented in this thesis are outlined in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 describes the structure of the language detailing phonology and morphophonological procedures, word classes and nominal morphology. Chapter 3 discusses the formal structure of Bunuba verbal morphology. In this Chapter I discuss the two verb types: simple and complex, the affixes which may attach to verbs including core and oblique pronominal marking, and tense, aspect, mood marking. The two-part verbal structure includes a coverb and an auxiliary. The coverb conveys lexical content and inflects only marginally for aspect. The auxiliary includes an obligatory auxiliary root to which affixes attach. These include pronominal affixes and TAM marking. The majority of the grammatical workload of Bunuba verbs takes place in the auxiliary. A verb which occurs with both a coverb and an auxiliary is a complex verb, whereas a verb which involves only an auxiliary is a simple verb construction.

Pronominal marking in Bunuba marks core and non-core, or oblique participants, through affixation. Intransitive subjects (S), transitive subjects (A) and transitive objects (O) are marked as prefixes to the auxiliary root whereas non-core participants are marked as suffixes to the auxiliary root. A system of inverse alignment is described in the transitive set of core pronominal prefixes which is based on an animacy/participant hierarchy. TAM marking in Bunuba is a complex system of prefixing, suffixing and coverb reduplication.

Chapter 4 focuses on less formal features of verb morphology and discusses the semantics of the auxiliary roots. There is a limited set of auxiliary roots in complex verbs which

function to classify coverbs. Simple verbs do not perform this classifying function, but do exhibit a system of complex polysemy of senses. The Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) semantic framework provides the basis for the discussion of verbal semantics in this Chapter.

Chapter 5 is a detailed discussion of Gun.gunma, the Mother-in-law register in Bunuba. Like other Australian languages, Gun.gunma is marked by substitute vocabulary, but the verbal structure of the avoidance register is unusual when compared with other languages. It can be viewed as performing similar detransitivising strategies as antipassive constructions in other languages. The construction demotes A to S and bumps out the O from core pronominal prefix position to an optional oblique pronominal.

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Abbreviations and conventions

1	First person
2	Second person
3	Third person
A	Transitive subject: grammatical function
ABL	Ablative
ADV	Adverb
ADJ	Adjective
AGNT	Agent
ALL	Allative
AP	Antipassive
ASSERT	Assertive
C	Consonant
CAUS	Causal
CHAR	Characterised
COM1	Comitative 1
COM2	Comitative 2
CV	coverb
DAT	Dative
DEM	Demonstrative/deictic pronoun
DIR	Directional
DL	Dual (nominal number marking)
dl	Dual (verb participant number marking)
DUB	Dubitative
DYAD	Dyadic
EMPH	Emphasis
excl	Exclusive
FUT	Future
GG	Gun.gunma substitute form
HAB	Habitual
/i/	Interrogative/Indefinite
IMP	Imperative
incl	Inclusive
ins	insert
INSTR	Instrumental
INT	Interjection
INTENS	Intensifier
IRR	Irrealis
ITER	Iterative
LINK	Linking
LOC	Locative
N	Nasal
no.add	No addressee (§7.2.5)
NONPAST	Nonpast

nsg	Non-singular
O	Transitive object: grammatical function
OBL	Oblique pronominal (bound or free form)
ONLY	Only
PAIR	Pair nominal suffix
PAST	Past
PERL	Perlative
PL	Plural (nominal number marking)
pl	Plural (verbal number marking)
pp	Person possessive
PRES	Present tense
PRO	Core pronoun (free form only)
PROX	Proximal (on verbs)
PUNCT	Punctual
QUAL	Quality
R	Restricted
R/R	Reflexive/Reciprocal
RED	Reduplicated
S	Intransitive subject: grammatical function
SEMB	Semblative
sg	Singular
sp.ADV	Spatial adverb
SUB	Subordinate clause marker
TAM	Tense, aspect, mode
T/M	Tense/mode
time.ADV	Time adverb
trans	Transitive marker (Kriol)
U	Unrestricted
V	Vowel
(v)	Optional vowel
-INV-	Inverse morpheme
Bro	Brother
Da	Daughter
Fa	Father
Mo	Mother
MoMo	Mother's mother
Si	Sister
So	Son

THE AUXILIARY ROOTS

MA	MA2
RA	RA2
WU	WU2
NI	YHA
NGARRI	
NA	

MAL+NI (Chapter 5)

CONVENTIONS

.	Separator of glosses for fused meanings
-	morpheme break
=	enclitic break
()	optional element in meaning gloss or morphophonological gloss
< or >	direction of A acting on O (e.g. A>O or O<A)
/	optional senses in glosses
:	MA:SAY/DO or NA:SAY gloss (simple verb construction)
?	Uncertain gloss
~	Alternate form
[]	Subordinate clause markers
ˈ	Primary stress (in Chapter 2)
ˌ	Secondary stress (in Chapter 2)
bold	Gun.gunma substitute lexicon (primarily Chapter 5, but throughout)

ACRONYMS AND CAPITALISATIONS

AIATSIS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (formally AIAS)
AIAS	Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies
KLRC	Kimberley Language Resource Centre
NSM	Natural Semantic Metalanguage
SIL	Summer Institute of Linguistics

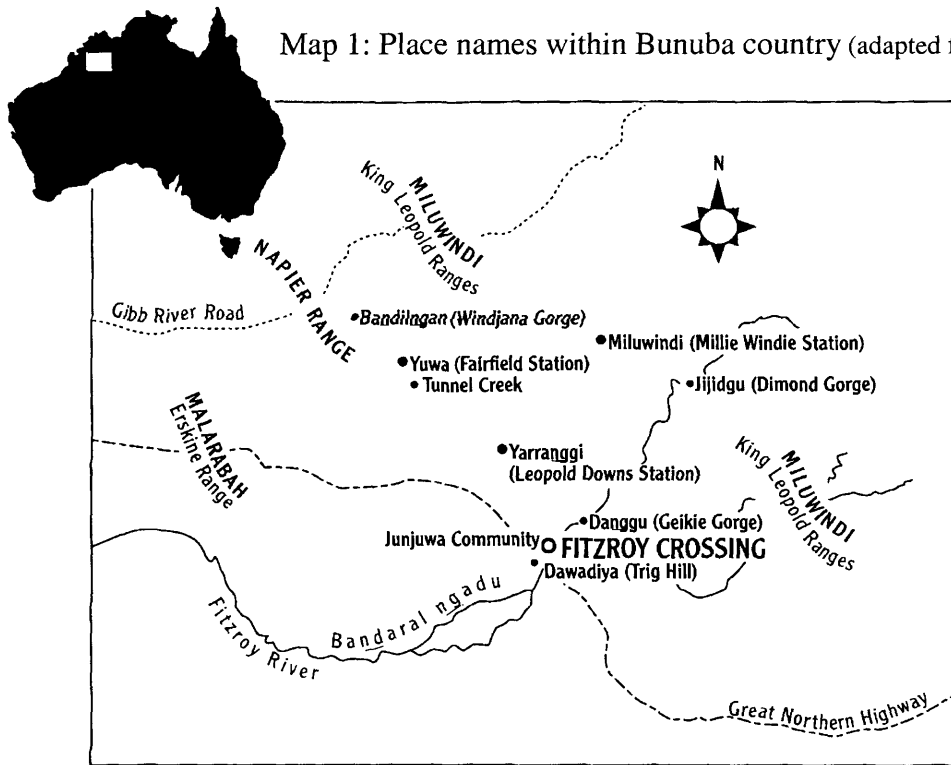
EXAMPLE SENTENCE LAYOUT

The example sentence structure throughout this thesis is based on four lines of information. The first line is the Bunuba language example set out in *italic* script. Borrowed words are set out in plain text in this line indicating non-Bunuba status. The second and third lines are an interlinear gloss of the Bunuba language material based on the abbreviations set out in this section (above). The fourth line is the English free translation of the Bunuba language examples which appears in plain script. The example below shows these conventions:

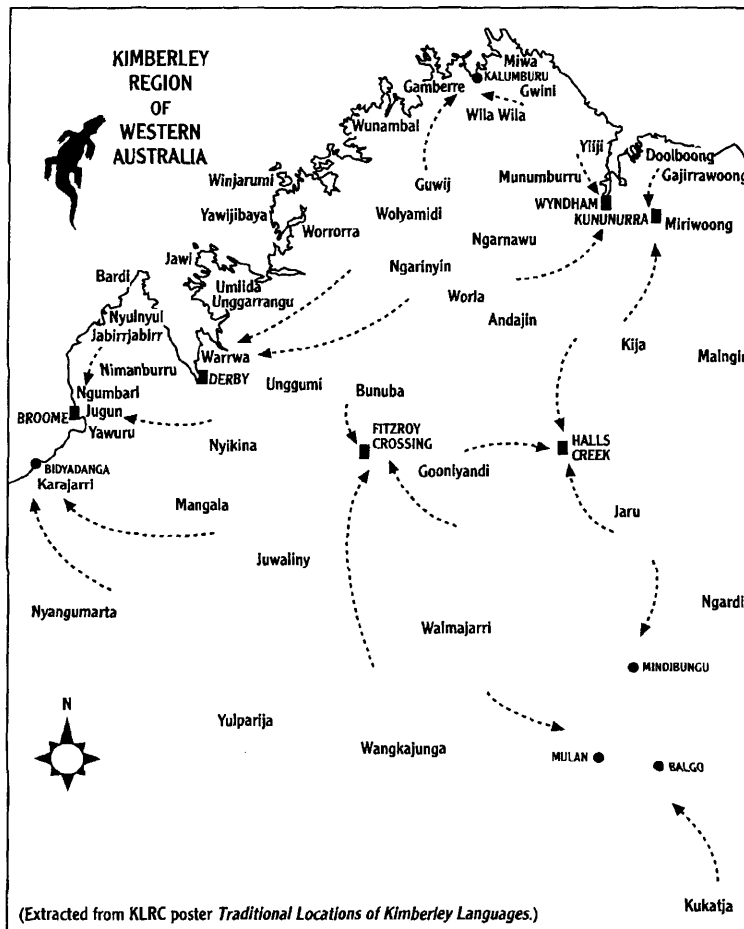
<i>Wad</i>	<i>burraygi</i>	<i>miyhabilinyi.</i>
wad	wurr-ra-y-g(v)	miyha-bilinyi
go	3nsgS-RA-PAST-pl	meat-PERL
They all went for meat. (BO.2001)		

Example numbers indicate the chapter to which the example belongs. 4-21 refers to example 21 in chapter 4. Unless otherwise indicated, the examples are from Bunuba. The information in brackets immediately following the English translation refers to the source of the Bunuba material based on my notation methods. The reference to speakers is based on their European name initials which are set out in Table 1-5. The numbers which appear after these initials refer to the referencing system I have used for audio recorded materials. The year of data collection also usually appears in these brackets. Occasionally, some data has come about through elicitation and this is indicated in the brackets. Data as a result of elicitation of the Natural Semantic Metalanguage primes is indicated through the appearance of 'NSM' in these brackets.

Map 1: Place names within Bunuba country (adapted from KLRC 1998)



Map 2: Traditional Locations of Kimberley Languages (adapted from KLRC 1998)¹



(Extracted from KLRC poster *Traditional Locations of Kimberley Languages.*)

¹ The arrows on Map 2 indicate the movement of speakers of the traditional languages after European contact and the location of those speakers today.